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INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND THE CONCEPT OF WORLD SECTIONS.

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WHAT can most profitably be transferred to political theory, no less than to philosophy, from natural science is its method rather than its special results. A dim foreshadowing of this truth is to be found in Seeley's dictum that historians have given to history the conscientiousness of science, but not yet its arrangement. Now there is more in 'arrangement' than meets the eye at first glance. For many modern thinkers hold that it is precisely in the orderly and economical arrangement of facts that the power of the scientific method lies. In other words the effectiveness of science comes from its deliberate choice of a convenient conceptual symbolism. Its laws are shorthand expressions of the relations between facts in terms of the concepts used; and the power supplied by those concepts is that of enabling one to trace correlations in fields otherwise too complex to be handled. The crux of the whole method, then, lies in the choice of concepts.

In this paper I have attempted to show how the setting up of concepts in the domain of international politics is both possible and helpful in exactly the same way as in the natural sciences. The outstanding problem in this field can be simply stated: out of the present international anarchy has arisen the desire in all lands for some means of co-operation between nations to avoid wars which, in the

present state of man's technical mastery over nature, threaten the destruction of civilisation. The idea of a League of Nations which shall replace the 'precarious equipoise' of states by some real partnership is based on this hope. Innumerable schemes have been devised. But what is more urgently needed than clear-cut schemes—ready to drop on the world like harness on a horse—is some concise and exact description of the human and historical difficulties which all such schemes have to face in the world of fact. That preliminary task is our present concern.

The particular concept whose utility I wish to illustrate in this analysis of the existing interplay of forces is that of *world-sections*. This I shall use as a kind of 'atomic' concept out of which others may be constructed as they become necessary. And side by side with the setting up of the proper descriptive machinery there will appear, as I hope to show, indications of the lines along which the main problem may be hopefully attacked.

By a vertical section of the world is meant any division of mankind into classes which are geographically limited in extension; the existence of different languages is a vertical section. By a horizontal section is meant a division into classes which tend to world-wide extension. Thus the industrial revolution was a horizontal section producing capitalists and proletarians in all lands. Like every other classification of the world of things, these sections do not give rise to rigid blocks with sharp outlines; nor is the main distinction between horizontal and vertical sections put forward as something absolute. None the less it is one which can be readily recognised in practice.

In applying this to the description of how the present aspirations towards some kind of international control have arisen, we may first note that vertical section, such as the intensification of national feeling, obviously has a general tendency to cut across the horizontal grain of internationalism. So forcible a vertical section as war, how-

ever, not only accentuates the vertical division into states but also splits the world horizontally—like a blow on a crystal possessing horizontal cleavage. It creates the reaction which, from the time of Erasmus, has led men to seek the means of attaining a world-wide and permanent peace. This secondary cleavage has been aided in our time by the immense ramification of horizontal interests during the past fifty years. It is this which lulled men's minds to a false sense of security, and led them to feel that so violent a vertical section as war was impossible in modern civilisation. The persistence of such pre-war cleavage has definitely affected the course of events. It has been the line along which the war has spread, like lava in a rock, to cover the earth. In the New World the strain to which it gave rise has broken through the vertical barrier of the Monroe Doctrine. It is not surprising, then, that it is precisely here—under the impulse of the same force as accomplished that breakdown—that we find the strongest movement towards a horizontal statement of the questions at issue; and it is *the initial cleavage underlying this development* which converts the proposal of a League of Nations, for the first time in history, into a question of practical politics.

Now a nation is a vertical section whilst a league tends to the horizontal. Hence it is of no use our gauging the importance of whatever international tendencies there may be, unless at the same time we balance them against the vertical obstacles they have to overcome. As soon as the problem is stated in this form it is obvious that no horizontalism, however strong, is likely to sweep away the very real and virile national feeling of our time. Even if we ultimately judge that, so far as human foreknowledge can tell, the future is not to be one of harsh national *laissez-faire*, it is clear from the outset that neither will it be one of vague cosmopolitanism without vertical differentiation. Unity, if it is to be attained at all, will be through community of individual interests; not through abstract legal uniformity, as in the *Pax Romana*, nor through autocratic moral uniformity, as in the days of the Holy Roman Empire. There

are too many natural divisions in the world for that. Failure to understand the drift of the times towards one such division—nationality—was the main weakness of the series of attempts beginning with the *Projet de traité pour rendre la paix perpétuelle* of St. Pierre, published in 1713. Some of his proposals are strikingly similar to modern ones, but it is clear that St. Pierre regarded the nation as merely a community bound together by allegiance to a sovereign. It is not surprising, then, that the failure of his project was followed by the natural development, in Rousseau's *Jugement sur la paix perpétuelle*, of attempting a peace by appeal not to princes but to the brotherhood of an enlightened humanity. The French Revolution with its triumph of the collective will over the divine rights of kings strengthened such hopes for a world peace, and Kant's treatise *Zum ewigen Frieden* (1795) followed a similar line. Enlightened self-interest and the growth of the moral idea, together with republican institutions would — he thought — mean that the people would never be for war. The immense driving force embodied in the growing idea of nationality rendered appeals to kings and to peoples alike unavailing.

It is recognition of this fact which has led in our day to the opposite view that, since we cannot afford to neglect the vertical section into nations, all that is necessary is a strong homeopathic dose of national division. All will be well, it is believed, if once the world gets itself parcelled out to satisfy the many claims to nationality. It is true that the forcible setting up of state sections not coincident with national divisions has been a fruitful cause of war. Yet Mazzini's vision of a world peace between free peoples has not been realised—a fact which modern history has scarcely exhibited as due entirely to the continued existence of autocratic governments. It must be said at once, however, that the liberation of nations would be a useful step; but it could only be a preliminary one. It represents a forward movement by its recognition of the often neglected distinction between nations and states. Non-recognition

of this distinction has been the source of much confusion. We shall, therefore, attempt to reach as precise a statement of it as possible.

The opposition between vertical and horizontal section has application to smaller units than the world; it is present in every form of social grouping. No matter how primitive the group, there exists in it the possibility of vertical section—leading to individualism—side by side with the possibility of its horizontal antithesis, co-operation. Certain insect communities form examples of extreme horizontalism. Thus Prof. Julian Huxley has doubted whether the single ant, rather than the whole ant-hill, is properly to be regarded as the individual; vertical section seems to have disappeared. Now what makes an associated group out of an aggregate of individuals—a cricket team out of a casual collection of people—is the possession of a common horizontal purpose. A community is the result of an integration of many such partial associations; and a nation is one class of such integrated wholes. It may involve other vertical sections—race, language, geographical contiguity—but it does not necessarily coincide with them. Now from the fact that a nation is a sum of partial associations, it does not follow that it is any casual collection of such. It is, rather, a natural product of the group instinct; a result of that ancestral impulse to herd and community formation by the intensified use of which man has attained his superiority in the animal world. Aristotle seems to have sensed this in his view of the community as an essential to human life as such. “Man without his fellows is either a Beast or a God.” And its ‘natural’ origin is borne out by the fact that it is the possession of a common historical tradition and unity of feeling which gives to a nation its varying but characteristic solidity. This does not imply that there is any mystical addition to the sum of its parts, such as seems to be suggested by sociologists like Durkheim. Nor need we regard it as the ‘organic’ collective mind of the idealist. The nation is a

spontaneous natural unity much as a solid stereoscopic view (once caught) is a unified whole, in spite of its being nothing more than the sum of two separate aspects.

It is now possible to define what is meant in modern times by the state. It is the conscious organisation or tool, for attaining some of the purposes which relate the associated communities of which it is the organ. The nation is brought into being by common social purposes; the state is the always defective political machine for effecting some of them. If there were no horizontal community of aim (such as is produced by danger from external aggression) cutting across the national divisions of the Dual Monarchy, that state would fall to pieces. But *conscious will can build a state on very little common interest*. On the other hand the forcible vertical section of the Polish nation has left it without a state of its own, even though its unity of purpose has persisted. The state is thus a more artificial thing than a nation; it can be made and destroyed more easily. The striking lesson of the rise of Japan to power is an illustration of this truth; it shows that the modern state can easily be constructed and fitted on to non-European shoulders. Our problem will, then, ultimately become a world problem and not one for European or 'Western' nations only.

The distinction between the nation and the state has been much accentuated in modern times. When we come to the larger communities of our day we have to realise that increase in size introduces qualitative, as well as quantitative differences; it is not a matter of simple multiplication. We cannot, as Mr. Delisle Burns has clearly pointed out, assume that the modern state is only a larger but similar form of the Greek *polis* or the mediæval *regnum*. A common wooden shed multiplied in size a thousand times would sink under its own weight; to make such increase possible, qualitatively different material must be used. And one of the qualitative changes induced in states by their tremendous growth is their disjunction from the communities whose tools they are. But this has a vital

bearing on our problem. For modern state-theory has tended to identify the state with the nation; and in actual practice the group loyalty of the nation has usually been diverted uncritically to the support of the state. Thus the state has slowly gathered power as an end in itself, and not merely as a means. In the event of war—however despicable the diplomatic excuses, however petty or mean the true state-motive—it has nearly always been possible to enlist the deeply inherent herd instinct of man on its side. A blow at the state is regarded as striking at the very heart of group solidarity; and all wars thus become wars of defence. It is this which has turned the vision of Mazzini into an unsubstantial dream.

We cannot legitimately conclude, however, that war is due mainly to the wickedness or incapacity of diplomatists and governing classes, the mere executive of states—any more than we can believe that militarism is due to soldiers. For the relation between the state and the nation is a reciprocal one. If war is one of the functions for which the state has been organised, the nation must have had a community purpose of which that function is the expression. As a matter of hard fact nations have sometimes found, as in the winning of Italian unity, that war was necessary for their defence or development. But to acknowledge that war is one of the functions for which the state has been organised is not to agree that it is its supreme function. If war is allowed to lord it over the humaner functions of the state it will seriously hamper them—like the military procession mentioned by Liebknecht, which held up the fire-engine in the streets of Berlin.

We may conclude our analysis of the main vertical barriers to internationalism by acknowledging frankly a fact which many thinkers of high moral outlook have wrongly supposed to be a conclusive reason for the continuance of war: that the external success of a state brings internal quickening and unity to the nation. We must firmly point out, in denying the conclusion whilst admitting the premiss, that even a legitimate defensive success has often given rise to

the state-doctrine of pan-nationalism. The unity of Italy was followed by the sordid Tripoli campaign. It is one thing to be one, as a united family working for the weal of all; it is another thing to lose this goodly reality of unity for the deadly shadow of imperialism, by which is meant concern for external dominion. Yet so long as nations believe that they can only be great, or hold their own, by the destruction of others—so long will they be organised for war, and find it impossible to slacken their efforts in the mad race for power. If we cannot rise above the gigantic international *Schadenfreude* in which we live, the humane functions of the state will continue to be overshadowed by its function for war; and nothing can save us from a series of increasingly devastating conflicts.

When we pass to the opposite set of tendencies—those making in the direction of a horizontal world order—we are met at the outset by a series of forces which, though powerful, have up to now proved hopelessly inadequate to resist the vertical impulse of war.

Thus it was supposed that religion was slowly creating a stable horizontalism. But if we mean by religion the organised Churches, we find that, even within a single type such as European Christianity, innumerable vertical sects have arisen since the Reformation. This process was probably as essential to religious liberty as the contemporaneous rise of sovereign states to political liberty. But it has almost destroyed the horizontal influence of Churches. And if we draw a distinction between organised Churches and the spirit of which they are the embodiment, we find that even the latter shows—under the stress of war—a certain amount of vertical section. This is not surprising when we remember that religion has always appealed to that flower of the group instinct, self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a reaction in all lands from the critical confining of group loyalty to the nation—a movement which is vital to religion if it is to justify its high claim to universality.

The international solidarity of labour is another force which has proved ineffective. But it has not been completely destroyed, and may still have to be reckoned with. The failure of the Russian revolution was not so much due to the weakness of this force as to the fact that, in its later phase, it was an attempt to reach a final world order by converting the vertical war into a horizontal one. At the back of this attempt was the theory that there is only one constant and calculable motive underlying all the surgings of foreign policy, and all the groupings and regroupings of Powers—namely, financial interests. War, on this view, is not a breakdown of peace conditions but merely an uncovering of previously existing forces whose presence has hitherto kept the competing interests in dynamic equilibrium. From this it follows that the destruction of the capitalist system is a necessary preliminary to constructive peace. Now it is idle to deny that sordid financial interests have been behind many an idealistic call to arms. But battles are not fought between financial groups; they are fought between peoples. And there is no reason to believe that, even if capitalist exploitation could be swept away, war between peoples would cease; for the minor factor of aggressive finance merely brings into play the major factor of national feeling. If that factor can be enlisted on the side of peace, no selfish interest will be able to stand against it; if it cannot, nothing will save us from war.

But the most powerful of all the horizontal tendencies of our time has been the slow realisation of the full consequences of the industrial revolution. Scientific development has come from specialisation; its policy is "Divide and conquer." *Its division, however, is horizontal according to function*; and in consequence, wherever we get division of labour in a community it binds the whole group vertically together with strong bonds of interdependence. If you cut in two a primitive colonial organism which has very little cell differentiation, it will not be much inconvenienced; if you halve an animal whose cells have highly

specialised functions, it means death to it.¹ Now, economically the world is one, its divisions are horizontal divisions of function, and vertical section therefore means economic disorganisation. Cobden and Bright realised the interdependence of the world's markets. Their lineal descendant, Mr. Norman Angell, has shown us the more intricate interdependence of the world's banks and exchanges. It is sometimes airily supposed that all this has been swept away by the war. That is not so. Undoubtedly the world shows greater powers of enduring the economic disintegration of war than was ever thought possible; but it is there, none the less. Indeed national dependence is made clearer than ever before. To give two examples only: England would starve but for the economic co-operation of other nations; and in modern industrialised warfare it is now seen to be a physical impossibility for any state to remain completely neutral. And yet, although this economic horizontalism is strong enough to survive war, it was not sufficient to prevent it. We must therefore grant full recognition to the fact that any purely economic and bloodless view of international politics, not taking into account the instinctive and confused and heroic motives of real men, can only give us results of partial value. Group instinct is rooted deeper in human nature than the biologically later economic interest. It carries with it a tremendous power of disinterested activity which has upset, and will upset again, all the calculations of the economists.

At this point, however, we must make a very important distinction between the strong sentiments of the group, especially when in danger, and the real truth of the matter. The ordinary man in any nation has a very distinct feeling of difference from members of other nations. This is fostered by his school-books and newspapers, by his prefer-

¹ It should be noted that section of more highly developed organisms is sometimes possible. Biologists regard this possibility as due to the capacity of the cells of such organisms to break down and revert to a more primitive homogeneous type.

ence for the homely familiar, and by his spatial separation from foreigners. So arises an illusory view of the world as divided neatly into vertical sections. But the fact that we must take this illusion seriously into account does not in the least imply that we should be taken in by it. The truth is that in the modern world man is the centre of a conflict of group loyalties; he is under horizontal as well as vertical stresses. In the struggle between Dr. Stockmann's scientific conscience and his common interest with his fellow townsmen lies the tragedy of Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*. Professional solidarity brings an English professor of mathematics nearer to a German colleague than to an English docker. The continual conflict between men's class-consciousness and their loyalty to the nation may give rise to strikes in time of war; and on the other hand there is more than a suspicion that it has sometimes led a privileged class inside a state to avoid internal dispossession by making external war.

It is not, then, other-worldly idealism but cold matter of fact which forces us to the conclusion that our age is characterised by the rapid growth of horizontal tendencies. Every human activity by which man has raised himself to pre-eminence in the world has been intensified. Religion, philosophy, art, science—all come from man's conscious co-ordination of the experience he has in common with other human beings. They are unconditioned by time and place, and make their appeal across all vertical divisions. And it is their sum which gives rise to that growing common conscience of the civilised world, that *Sittlichkeit*, on which all our hopes of internationalism must ultimately be founded.

In our analysis we have been brought back again and again to one consideration: the possibility of man's group instinct, centred about his home and country, being diverted uncritically to the aid of any tendency to war. At first sight the solution of this central problem seems easy. We have only to persuade the mass of men that their true

economic, or political, or class interests are seldom at issue in war. But the community has usually been engaged to the support of a war only when it was either an accomplished, or a fatally inevitable fact. And communities in actual danger do not think; they act.

Now if there were in existence a League, each member of which was pledged to allow what has been called a 'cooling-off' time—or period of consideration—to elapse before declaring war over any dispute whatsoever, then a great part of this danger would be avoided. For communities, though powerful when moved, are slow to move. It has always been a cause of complaint against them that they were too peace-loving, too content to ask only security from the state. We are not, for the moment, concerned, with the desirability of this inertia in communities, but only with the fact of its existence. For that fact makes it possible to convert what is now the great stumbling block to peace into a barrier against war. The anxiety of the governments of all the warring states to justify themselves in the eyes of their people is one indication of the strength this barrier would possess. And modern history provides us with examples of the fact that governments have time and time again found it necessary to set up mythical stories of actual attack before the nation could be moved. It is not, then, that group instincts are beyond human control; it is only that in present conditions they make for war instead of being directed to constructive purposes.

But has our analysis shown anything like the community of interest necessary to enable us to build up such a League? There is only one way of deciding that question: if there is a vigorous horizontalism it will have translated itself into legal enactments. When a group of discrete people possess sufficient community of interest to form a club, that interest finds its material embodiment in rules. Are there any horizontal world rules? Let us be clear, again, as to the exact issue. We are not discussing the efficacy of rules; we are only concerned with their possible existence: because if they exist the horizontalism which

produced them exists, and may be strong enough to form the required basis.

Now from Grotius down to the Hague Conferences of our time there has been an uninterrupted development of international law. It has been argued that this is not law because it was not made by a supreme legislature. But as Sir Henry Maine has pointed out, a community need not wait until it has established sovereign authority before it can recognize the existence of laws. "What we have to notice," he said, "is that the founders of International Law, though they did not create a sanction created a law-abiding sentiment." The absence of a Court of universal jurisdiction has been lamented since the time of Dante's *De monarchia*, comments Sir F. Pollock. But, as he goes on to show, international law does not differ in this possession of only partial sanction from the early condition of all systems of law. Thus the Hague Conferences must be regarded not as an end, but as part of a process leading logically to international sanction.

The fact that international law is often overruled in war-time—although each state acknowledges its existence, in accusing others of breaking it—must not blind us to the miracle that it was ever kept at all without a permanent tribunal to interpret it. Our contention is that this ramification of law—and of treaties—between states shows that there is sufficient community of interest on which to found a League of Powers pledging themselves to refer all disputes covered by existing international law and treaty obligations to a permanent judicial tribunal whose decisions should be final.

The disputes which usually give rise to war are, however, over questions *not* covered by existing law—such as those involving national honour or vital interests. But conciliation is a well-established method in diplomacy. And it would involve no radical change of principle for the Powers to refer all disputes not covered by existing law or treaties to a standing council of conciliation—the Powers to refrain from war until its recommendations are pub-

lished and for a certain time after. *A pledge to submit all disputes to one or other of these international organs would constitute a practicable minimum basis for what we may call a League of Powers.*

This would not yet be a true League of Nations; but even such a limited first step towards that end would have great advantages. It would provide, for the world and for its own people, an objective test of a Power's sincerity. It would bring into existence a normal routine of procedure for all disputes—an important matter; for peace, like literary inspiration and war, comes from preparedness. Finally it would serve as a nucleus around which otherwise vague aspirations to a world view for peace or war could crystallise. If only a few great Powers joined the League and made a horizontal, less parochial, statement of their aims, the rest would probably have to follow under pressure from their peoples. And the tendency towards a franker and more open diplomacy would have freer play; the disadvantages of secret treaties (even to the Powers concerned) being nowadays strongly realised by all peoples.

But a League of Powers as thus constituted would lay itself open to the very serious criticism brought against it by most of the historians who have discussed the question: that it would degenerate, like every other setting up of the machinery of order without any provision for changing conditions, into a futile attempt to petrify the world in the shape it chanced to have when the League was formed. And Powers could justify war as the only means of changing a *status quo* in which they had no place. Any League which aims at being a living thing must not, therefore, confine itself to avoiding collision between states; it must arrange for their co-operation in the difficult art of keeping pace with the times.²

² Since this was written there has appeared, in the *English Review* for August, 1918, a striking and important article by Mr. H. N. Brailsford in which this view is strongly expressed. He writes "the penalty of rigidity in the State is revolution, as in the world of States it is war." The league must not be conceived as a mere external bond of a treaty of arbitration. For "that way lies

We have already recognised that what binds individuals into a group is community of purpose. A mere static desire for peace would probably be sufficient to bring into being a League of Powers; but the common purpose needed to bring nations into active co-operation must be something more vigorous and more permanent than this. If such co-operation is for the attainment of a more effective legal order than the existence of a judicial body alone provides, the addition to it of a legislative organ would be quite a possible step. For it would merely be a systematisation of the international legislation by conferences which grew up in the last century. If, again, co-operation is wanted for the solving of administrative problems common to all states, it can be attained by the extension of existing international commissions. The immense network of international administration is little realised by the ordinary citizen. As Mr. L. S. Woolf has noted, "the very success of these experiments has served to cover them with obscurity." For each of these modes of co-operation the existing economic and financial horizontalism forms a sufficient basis. And there would be the hope that if such co-operation were developed it might lead to the recognition that 'irreconcilable national interests' often turn out, when frankly faced, to be not so irreconcilable after all; that they more often arise from the ambitions of small cliques of concessionaires than from true national interest.

But even if we view these possibilities in the most sanguine manner, the fact remains that any attempt to settle so-called 'political' questions by international co-operation, or arbitration, would meet with tremendous opposition. So obviously powerful a method of peaceful settlement as the international control of key industries and

stagnation and, in the end, the inevitable insurgence of living forces against this death in life. Change is a biological necessity. The damning verdict on the old Europe is not that its suppressed impulses for change flamed at last into a universal war, but rather that its structure was so rigid, its power of self-adjustment so limited, that save through war no radical change was possible within it."

danger zones, and the international distribution of vital raw materials, would be opposed by both financial and diplomatic interests. If any such attempt is ever made the only possible commission for dealing with those questions would be one which represented peoples—not Powers. It should be capable of impartial investigation, and should therefore represent all horizontal classes. A League of that type would cease to be a mere Holy Alliance of states and become a *real League of Nations*. The machinery for this presents great difficulties, but not necessarily insuperable ones; and once set up the dangers of vertical redivision would be lessened by the immediate emergence of horizontal parties.

It would at once be claimed that this involves interference with the sovereignty of members of the League. So it does; but you cannot have sovereignty and co-operation together.³ In its every-day meaning, sovereign power is quite incompatible with any real "enthronement of the idea of public right" between states. For as soon as any will is subject to law, it loses its unlimited liberty of action—its sovereignty—and gains a corresponding control over the wills of others. What it loses in horizontal liberty (duties) it gains in vertical power (rights). This is the root paradox of civilisation: that loss of extensive liberty should bring gain in intensive development. The theoretical anarchist's claim to strict verticality could only lead to loss of vertical power itself; for the full development of the individual's particular bent requires the delegation of those activities for which he is not specially fitted, but which are necessary for his physical existence. Somewhere or other the humble ploughman must be providing the artist's bread. But if the individualist accepts the duties of other men he must accept also their rights over him. So with nations. Loss of sovereignty does not mean giving up individuality; it is the only way of safeguarding it. It is

³ Unless by sovereignty is meant nothing more than relative political autonomy of states.

the hard—the sanely virile—way. The weak and blustering policy of “security” only gives adequate return for its fearful cost if the state adopting it can stretch its tentacles from one strategic point to another until it possesses the earth. If there are to be rights at all, states must rely for their security on the goodwill engendered by performance of their duties, and on common action of peoples against anarchy. States must therefore surrender their claim to sovereignty, or else forego all possibility of public right in their relation with each other.

Into the discussions of philosophers on state sovereignty we need not enter. It will be sufficient to note that the pluralism of modern realists accords better with the picture of nations as interconnected, multicellular organisms which our analysis has shown them to be, than the absolute unity of the monistic philosopher. For in such pluralism there is no tendency to cling to unity to the extent of denying the obvious factual horizontalism in the world. Nor is there the danger, on such a view, of confusing the nation with the state; the artificial tool with the community life producing it. Nations, guilds, religions, communities—all these are what Mr. Graham Wallas calls will-organisations. For each member of a larger whole, freedom consists in a balance between rights and duties. And co-operation between either groups or individuals implies a guidance of activities so that their purposes are in the direction of the main current of horizontal desire. Such guidance is what we mean by democracy; it is the tendency to discover, and to organise for the attainment of, net resultant ends. There is, therefore, a very real sense in which a League of Nations as defined above is the only possible means of “making the world safe for democracy.”

From the very nature of human groupings it follows that only a strong horizontal purpose can supply the motive power for a true and stable world league. Apart from the growing common will and economic necessity of all peoples to evade the crushing burden of war and armaments, there

is only one such purpose wide enough; and that is an unpretentious and as yet dimly realised one—the enlistment of all peoples in the vast war against nature. In this struggle there is, as William James has pointed out, full opportunity for the satisfaction of man's instinct to disinterested devotion, ample material for a 'moral equivalent' to war. And though the purpose has at the moment small driving power, development would follow if a nucleus were provided about which it could crystallise—conscious will, as we have noted, being able to build upon very little common interest to begin with.

In this horizontal struggle against natural forces the nations are complementary to each other. For the supreme aim of intensive exploitation of the earth's resources can only be effectively attained by each nation's supplying its own peculiar product to the sum total of human activity, and by each receiving from that total what it lacks. Such a view, which has been advocated in detail by M. Yves Guyot and others in the *Journal des Economists*, is more than a political programme. It is the expression of a fundamental principle of scientific method, that only by the slow, co-operative accumulation of results can advance be made. Isolation means failure.

The great influence working against the recognition of this truth is the irrational myth of "the struggle for existence." I have referred to this as irrational because it is founded on misunderstanding of a scientific phrase, and is not commonly used in direct argument but only held as the tacit presupposition of other arguments—especially by practical men. It is so widespread that we should probably be justified in regarding it as the very hallmark of our age.

The myth consists in the belief that the struggle for existence means, in the animal world, a vertical struggle to the death between species. From this it is concluded that a similar struggle between communities is inevitable; and that however unreasonable and intolerable war may become it is "a choice between us and the other fellow."

If a detailed survey of all the animals in any region is made, however, the picture obtained is not in the least one of vertical war to the death. The animals, after having selected their habitat by trial and error, spread themselves over the region in a complex patchwork of interlaced communities, showing a finely balanced system of interdependence and co-operation. Some animals prey on others of course; but the dominant factor which determines the survival of a group is suitability to the environment.⁴ This has been illustrated again and again by zoölogists; and Darwin himself, when speaking of the success of one species over another, said "we feel sure that the cause lies as much in one species being favoured as in another being hurt." In other words the outstanding feature of animal communities is not the vertical war between groups but the horizontal war of the groups with nature.

The influence of this mere mistake in fact on the spirit of our time has been enormous. It seems much too small a thing to have had such consequences as a philosophy of imperialism; but so did the small but persistent influences of the uniformitarians seem too minute to explain geological changes to those who sought for explanations in more dramatic cataclysms. The myth is insidious and cumulative in its effect of psychological suggestion. It has bred the suspicion which leads to vain attempts at absolute security through overwhelming victory or through strategic expansion. So arises the attitude of mind which sees good in quantity of life and not in its quality. "Wider still and wider" is the cry; not better, or fuller, or wiser. These natural but baleful results can only be resisted by a clear disclaimer which will put, in direct form, the truth that nations are (in Prof. Forster's phrase) as necessary to each other as the two sexes; that each can contribute its unique achievement to the scientific exploitation of natural forces. Man's instinct to the physical struggle between vertical

⁴ See, e.g., Dr. V. Shelford's *Animal Communities in Temperate America*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1913.

groups may have arisen as biologically useful at a certain stage in his history; but it has outlasted its utility—like his appendix. Conscious control alone can remove such dangers to the race. But control can only come from clear recognition of the diverse forces producing the complexities of international politics. With the best will in the world confused thought will mean failure to harness the great forces at work. It is lack of foresight that has plunged us into catastrophe; and now, as Professor Gilbert Murray has told us, “the only remedy for bad thinking is to think better.”

I have tried to show that a great help to better thinking is to be found in that same method of concept formation which has advanced so immensely man’s power over the material world. And though I have not scrupled to express certain conclusions, it is the *method* of correlation rather than the results which I wish to emphasise. The stress that method lays on the need for understanding and descriptive power does not involve, I think, an undue reliance on the more luminous, rational part of man. For though instincts lag behind reason they ultimately grow in the mould of habit it sets for them. And thus an international organisation more in accord with the facts of the modern world would be not only the expression of, but also a real aid to, the transference of men’s group loyalty to the larger whole.

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